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WALKING THE LABYRINTH: PATH TO WHOLENESS

by Shaaron Honeycutt

When the decision was made to add a labyrinth to the list of Institute amenities, Shaaron Honeycutt was a natural choice to coordinate the project. Shaaron has nurtured a partnership with Earth energies since childhood and expresses that affinity through her poetry and her magic garden, Terre Vibrant. She is the wife of TMI Operations Director A. J. Honeycutt.

As part of the 1998 Professional Seminar week, a permanent labyrinth was installed on the TMI grounds behind the Bob Monroe Research Lab, with a breathtaking view of the Blue Ridge Mountains and the New Land community—all sacred spaces/places in their own right. This group event was led by Professional Members Jim Beal and Roberta Shoemaker-Beal, who have built many labyrinths. It was the conscious and physical effort of all who participated to outwardly manifest the temenos (holy place) within each of us.

What is a labyrinth? This magical maze possesses a single path to and from its center. Instead of confusing, it illuminates, calms, clarifies, focuses, and heals. Used as a walking meditation, the labyrinth reconnects us to our own intuitive and spiritual center. It is also “in step” with the Western mind-set of doing. Coupled with the intent and energy of the builders and those who walk it, a powerful space is established in connection with our Earth.

Construction began on a misty, early Monday morning just after dawn. Hexagonal, brick-red paving blocks were used to contrast with the green grass and match the roofs of the surrounding buildings. The site of the current labyrinth, and that of an earlier one built in 1996, approximates the location of Robert Monroe’s memorial celebration. The present powerful site was divined and dowsed by a few of the participants using dowsing rods, wild cherry branches, and their own intuitive feel. The Devic kingdom was asked to benevolently guide the event and the placement. The center, the entrance, and whether this labyrinth would be left or right turning were determined that morning. The concentric circles were then marked in cracked corn, as an offering to Gaia and the ever-watchful guardian crows. After this mystical inception, Professional Members participated throughout the week by placing each hexagonal stone with conscious intent, to form the borders of the classical seven circuits.

Labyrinths are elementally arcane and archaic, whispering to us of sacred spaces both within and without. These ancient symbols date back to 1200 B.C. and have a history throughout the world. They are prominent in Greek, Roman, Native American, and Indian culture. In the medieval world, labyrinths symbolized both a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and the road Christ took to be crucified. We may journey into a labyrinth for all the purposes mentioned above and

more. It can be a tool for bringing about true groundedness and harmony with nature, as well as a means of gathering and focusing energy for healing of self and others.

Once the decision is made to embark on a labyrinth odyssey, a shift takes place, quieting the mind. We then enter into the *temenos* with a clear intent, concentrating with all aspects of our being: body, mind, spirit, and emotions. The walk is accomplished in open-hearted humility and receptivity to divine intervention. From the center, we spiral back out to our daily lives, integrating thoughts and feelings and folding a new awareness into our being with every step.

The Institute gratefully acknowledges all those who assisted in making this labyrinth such an amazing and special place—a true spiritual path.

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